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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
09/897,431	07/03/2001	Takashi Eki	31759-173641	8339
7590	07/06/2006		EXAMINER	
VENEABLE			NELSON, FREDA ANN	
Post Office Box 34385			ART UNIT	
Washington, DC 20043-9998			PAPER NUMBER	
			3639	

DATE MAILED: 07/06/2006

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary	Application No.	Applicant(s)	
	09/897,431	EKI, TAKASHI	
	Examiner	Art Unit	
	Freda A. Nelson	3639	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) Responsive to communication(s) filed on 12 April 2006.
- 2a) This action is FINAL. 2b) This action is non-final.
- 3) Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) Claim(s) 1-3,5-7 and 9-11 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) Claim(s) 1-3,5-7 and 9-11 is/are rejected.
- 7) Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) accepted or b) objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) All b) Some * c) None of:
1. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 3. Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- 1) Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2) Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 3) Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____
- 4) Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____
- 5) Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- 6) Other: _____

DETAILED ACTION

The amendment received on April 12, 2006 is acknowledged and entered. Claims 1, 3, and 7 have been amended. Claims 4 and 8 have been canceled. No claims have been added. Claims 1-3, 5-7, and 9-11 are currently pending.

Response to Amendment and Arguments

Applicant's arguments, see arguments, filed April 12, 2006, with respect to the rejection(s) of claim(s) 1, 3, 6-7, and 10-11 under U.S.C. 103(a) have been fully considered and are persuasive. Therefore, the rejection has been withdrawn. However, upon further consideration, a new ground(s) of rejection is made in view of Wang (US Patent Number 6,385,169).

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 112

The following is a quotation of the second paragraph of 35 U.S.C. 112:

The specification shall conclude with one or more claims particularly pointing out and distinctly claiming the subject matter which the applicant regards as his invention.

1. Claims 7 and 9 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention.

Claim 7 recites the limitation "the other " in line 10. There is insufficient antecedent basis for this limitation in the claim.

Claim 7 recites the limitation "the allotment " in line 19. There is insufficient antecedent basis for this limitation in the claim.

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As for claim 9, because the examiner is unable to determine if the preferential option or non-preferential option is actually determined on the basis of a time zone and on an amount of basic network resources because the claim language is indefinite, the examiner takes the position that that the preferential option and non-preferential option may not be determined on the basis of a time zone and on an amount of basic network resources.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

2. Claims 1, 3, 6-7, and 10-11 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Tse-Au (Patent Number 6,816,456) in view of Ebata et al. (Patent Number 6,708,209), in further view of Wang (US Patent Number 6,385,169).

As for claims 1 and 3, Tse-Au discloses that the resource controller 202 can dynamically allocate a particular amount of network resources to the data traffic of the differing traffic classes (col. 5, lines 16-18). Tse-Au further discloses that the sole function of the parent node is to apportion bandwidth that is allocated to itself to dependent children nodes of the parent. The parent will know if A's siblings have "left-over" bandwidth or not (col. 10, lines 40-47). Tse-Au still further discloses that the invention is a complete and cost-effective approach to provide differentiated quality of service for a network operator's critical traffic by traffic class priority (col. 1, lines 60-62). Tse-Au still further discloses that the resource managing device 116 may include a controller 202, a network interface 204, and a memory 206 (FIG. 2; col. 4, lines 60-61). Tse-Au still further discloses that by setting the bounded variable of a class to not bounded (F), the resource managing device 116 permits the data traffic and the corresponding class to use all additional bandwidth which is currently unused by

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another class or other classes; and unbounded means that a class of traffic can borrow unused bandwidth from other traffic classes through its immediate parent node (col. 10, lines 20-25).

Tse-Au does not disclose that the network resources provider charges a fee for the use of the basic network resources. Ebata discloses that the intra-organization resource allocation functional unit (300) also includes: a charging management unit (309) for performing necessary processing when fee charging occurs for the allocated resource; and a network configuration information updating unit (311) for periodically verifying and updating the contents of the network path information database (305a) and the resource allocation status database (306a) (col. 5, lines 29-44).

Wang discloses that in step 210, the ISP assigns a certain number of shares to the user based on the price paid or package selected by the user (col. 5, lines 30-38). Therefore, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to modify the invention of Tse-Au to include the feature of Ebata and Wang in order to provide a cost-effective approach to charging for differentiated quality of service for a network operator's critical traffic-by-traffic class priority.

As for claim 6, Tse-Au discloses that by setting the bounded variable of a class to not bounded (F), the resource managing device 116 permits the data traffic and the corresponding class to use all additional bandwidth which is currently unused by another class or other classes; and unbounded means that a class of traffic can borrow unused bandwidth from other traffic classes through its immediate parent node (col. 10, lines 20-25). Tse-Au still further discloses that by setting the bounded variable of a class to not bounded (F), the resource managing device 116 permits the data traffic and the corresponding class to use all additional bandwidth which is currently unused by another class or other classes; and unbounded means that a class of traffic can borrow unused bandwidth from other traffic classes through its immediate parent node (col. 10, lines 20-25)

In claim 7, Tse-Au discloses that the invention is a complete and cost-effective approach to provide differentiated quality of service for a network operator's critical traffic by traffic class priority (col. 1, lines 60-62). Tse-Au further discloses that the resource managing device 116 may include a controller 202, a network interface 204, and a memory 206 (FIG. 2; col. 4, lines 60-61). Tse-Au still further discloses that by setting the bounded variable of a class to not bounded (F), the resource managing device 116 permits the data traffic and the corresponding class to use all additional bandwidth which is currently unused by another class or other classes; and unbounded means that a class of traffic can borrow unused bandwidth from other traffic classes through its immediate parent node (col. 10, lines 20-25).

Tse-Au does not disclose said optional condition being at least one of a preferential option at a premium rate and a non-preferential option at a discount rate, said preferential option enabling one information provider terminal to use a part of the basic network resources or its entirety thereof allotted to another information provider terminal. said non-preferential option enabling the other information provider terminal to

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use a part of the basic network resources or its entirety thereof allotted to said one information provider terminal, and said fee corresponding to said premium rate associated with said preferential option and said discount rate associated with said non-preferential option. Ebata discloses that the intra-organization resource allocation functional unit (300) also includes: a charging management unit (309) for performing necessary processing when fee charging occurs for the allocated resource; and a network configuration information updating unit (311) for periodically verifying and updating the contents of the network path information database (305a) and the resource allocation status database (306a) (col. 5, lines 29-44).

Wang discloses that in step 210, the ISP assigns a certain number of shares to the user based on the price paid or package selected by the user (col. 5, lines 30-38). Therefore, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to modify the invention of Tse-Au to include the feature of Ebata and Wang in order to provide a cost-effective approach to charging for differentiated quality of service for a network operator's critical traffic-by-traffic class priority.

In claim 10, Tse-Au discloses that the resource managing device may perform network resource monitoring and control functions of the local network 110 and additionally, the resource managing device 116 can monitor and control the bi-directional data traffic between the global network 112 and the local network 110 over the communication links 119 (col. 3, lines 41-49).

In claim 11, Tse-Au discloses that if, however, parent node B's "bounded" variable is "F", parent node B can then borrow from B's own sibling(s) through B's parent C (i.e., C would be A's grandparent) if the combined bandwidth demand of B's children nodes exceeded the bandwidth that B is allocated. In this way, an "unbounded" traffic class A can borrow bandwidth from other traffic classes in the tree, from the same branch or from other branches through its parent and/or ancestor nodes, all the way up to the root level of the tree, so long as each of the higher ancestors of A is also not bounded. Tse-Au further discloses that if any higher ancestors of A, say D, are bounded, then if A is unbounded, A can borrow up to the tree level of D. In other words, A can borrow from other descendants' traffic classes of D (that D can reach from a "downward" direction), but not any other "branches" that D cannot reach in a "downward" mode, e.g., D's sibling(s) and the associated tree branches of the sibling(s) (col. 10, lines 48-64).

3. Claims 2, 5, and 9 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Tse-Au (Patent Number 6,816,456) in view of Ebata et al. (Patent Number 6,708,209), in further view of Wang (US Patent Number 6,385,169), still in further view of Perlman et al. (Patent Number 5,978,381).

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As for claims 2 and 5, Tse-Au does not disclose that the preferential option and said non-preferential option may be determined on the basis of a time zone. Perlman discloses that in the United States, residential local calls are generally charged at a flat-rate per month, regardless of duration and in other countries, local calls during off-peak hours are often cheaper than during peak hours. For example, in Japan, while local calls during peak hours are charged by the minute, a flat-rate service plan is available between the hours of 11 PM and 7 AM. Like the ISPs, phone companies must provide equipment and bandwidth to accommodate peak loads. During off-peak hours, this equipment and bandwidth sits idle, so the company may desire to incentive users to utilize the equipment during these hours (col. 6, lines 41-55). Therefore, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to modify the invention of Tse-Au to include the feature of Perlman et al. in order and charge for usage based on bandwidth usage during peak hours and non-peak hours across all time zones.

As for claim 9, Tse-Au does not disclose that the preferential option and said non-preferential option may be determined on the basis of a time zone. Perlman discloses that in the United States, residential local calls are generally charged at a flat-rate per month, regardless of duration and in other countries, local calls during off-peak hours are often cheaper than during peak hours. For example, in Japan, while local calls during peak hours are charged by the minute, a flat-rate service plan is available between the hours of 11 PM and 7 AM. Like the ISPs, phone companies must provide equipment and bandwidth to accommodate peak loads. During off-peak hours, this equipment and bandwidth sits idle, so the company may desire to incentive users to utilize the equipment during these hours (col. 6, lines 41-55). Therefore, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to modify the invention of Tse-Au to include the feature of Perlman et al. in order and charge for usage based on bandwidth usage during peak hours and non-peak hours across all time zones.

Conclusion

4. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Freda A. Nelson whose telephone number is (571) 272-7076. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday - Friday.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, John Hayes can be reached on 571-272-6708. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

FAN 06/27/2006

Meda Nelson

TAD
THOMAS A. DIXON
PRIMARY EXAMINER